

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

Processing of sorting a train of pixel values within the same line of a radiation image containing a gas part region or an air part region in a subject 5 and rearranging the train of pixel values within the same line from the pixels having higher pixel values to the pixels having lower pixel values, is executed over the entire image of the subject. A characteristic value is calculated from a 10 predetermined region of the image subjected to the sorting processing.